(e) In addition to modernisation, undertaken in Rourkela, Bokaro and Durgapur Steel Plants, SAIL is also taking steps on continuous basis to improve the profits and reduce losses which include increase in capacity utilisation, improving productivity, introducing energy conservation measures etc.

Improvement in capacity utilisation and removal of causes that are responsible for losses in IISCO and contingent upon modernisation/revival of IISCO. As IISCO has been referred to the BIFR since 1994, any scheme to be taken up for modernisation will have to be in accordance with the orders of the BIFR in this regard. Similarly, RINL has taken measures including setting up of balancing facilities between the converter shop and CCD, imparting Training and skill development to the employees by both deputing them to the operating plants abroad as well as by arranging training at site through foreign specialists, taking up modifications of the plant and equipment to improve the production pick-up and productivity, capital restructuring, and cost reduction initiative to contain the cost of production and increase realisations.

Loss of Customs duty due to unlateral duty free access to Imports from SAPTA Countries

933. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India will lose a maximum amount of Rs. 111 crores on customs duty if it gives unilateral duty free access to imports from SAPTA countries;

(b) if so, whether the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade has conducted a survey on measures to liberalise trade in SAARC;

(c) if so, the main points of the study; and

(d) the extent to which Government have examined the study report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (d) The Indian Institute of Foreign Trade has conducted a study and prepared a paper entitled "Measures to liberalise trade in SAARC: Revenue loss, trade diversion and competitivensess". In this paper revenue implications have been discussed for various duty concession options taking also into account the trade diversion that may take place as a result of granting duty free access to SAARC region. This study has estimated that unilateral duty free access to the Indian market for SAARC goods and diversion of trade would result in a customs duty loss of about Rs. 135 crores.

Steps to boost production of coal in Singareni Collieries

934. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether thermal power production in NTPC and urea production in Fertilizer Corporation of India are hit by acute coal shortages; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to boost production of coal in Singareni Collieries affected due to main in open cast mine arise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Singareni Collieries Company Ltd. has been able to maintain the required level of coal supplies to the NTPC's unit at Ramagundem during the current year inspite of production constraints arising out of heavy rains and problems related with industrial relations in the company. The coal supplies vis-a-vis linkages during the period from April, 96 to October, 96 to this power station was as follows:—

(Fig. in lakh tonnes)
(Date provisional)

Linkage	Supply	% materialisation
50.75	52.33	103%

In addition to the above. the power station was offered additional quantity by road from a nearby colliery. The power house, however, did not avail of this offer.

The Ramagundem unit of Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. (FCI) did not lift coal regularly during the period April-July, 96 due to their internal problems.